

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03  
H-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 EUR-12 NEAE-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00  
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P R 031448Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2942  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T BEIRUT 0479

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, LE, SY, SA, KU  
SUBJECT: THE WORK OF THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE IN LEBANON

1. DURING PAST WEEK, CHARGE HAS CALLED ON EGYPTIAN, KUWAITI AND SAUDI AMBASSADORS AND DISCUSSED WITH THEM, INTER ALIA, WORK OF THE QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE ASSISTING PRESIDENT SARKIS IN APPLICATION OF CAIRO ACCORDS. EGYPTIAN AMB MUTWALLI TALKED ONLY IN GENERALITIES, BUT SAUDI AMB AL-SHAER AND KUWAITI AMB AL-BOUAYJANE PROVIDED SOME INTERESTING INSIGHTS INTO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE.

2. COLLECTION OF HEAVY ARMS. ALL THREE AMBASSADORS INDICATED THEY ARE WELL AWARE THAT MANY HEAVY ARMS STILL HAVE NOT BEEN COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS MILITIA FORCES AND PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON. ALL SAID THAT THE COMMITTEE DELIBERATELY DECIDED TO GO SLOWLY. SAUDI AMBASSADOR, FOR EXAMPLE, SAID THAT THE ASF SHOULD NOT PLAY THE "CARD OF FORCE" EXCEPT AS A LAST RESORT. DESPITE URGINGS OF SYRIAN REP, COL. AL-KHULI, SAUDI AMB HAD PERSUADED HIS COLLEAGUES TO ADOPT THE TACTIC OF PRESENTING LEADERS OF ARMED GROUPS WITH LISTS OF QUANTITY AND LOCATION OF ARMS

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THEY ARE STILL HOLDING. OFFENDERS THEN HAD CHOICE OF EITHER DELIVERING ILLEGAL ARMS TO COLLECTION POINT OR, IF THEY DENIED POSSESSION, HAVING LOCATION INSPECTED. IF THEY REFUSED INSPECTION, IT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT BY FORCE. KUWAITI AMB NOTED THAT ASF HOW HAD STANDING ORDERS TO CONFISCATE HEAVY WEAPONS, AND QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE WAS NO LONGER CONCERNED WITH SUCH DETAILS AS WHEN AND HOW THE OPERATIONS WERE TO BE CARRIED OUT.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORDS. ALL THREE AMBASSADORS INSISTED THAT PALESTINIANS WERE NOT NOW INTERESTED IN LAUNCHING ANY ATTACKS AGAINST ISRAEL OR STIRRING UP TROUBLE ON THE BORDER, BUT WERE WAITING TO SEE IF USG EFFORTS TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL. ON OTHER HAND, PALESTINIANS WERE VERY RELUCTANT TO WEAKEN THEMSELVES MILITARILY. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO ACCORDS WAS A THORNY, COMPLEX PROBLEM BECAUSE, THE KUWAITI AMB SAID, THERE WERE ABOUT 25 SUBSEQUENT PARTIAL AGREEMENTS FLOWING FROM BASIC CAIRO AGREEMENT OF 1969 COVERING A VARIETY OF SPECIFIC SUBJECTS. THE PALESTINIANS AND THE LEBANESE FREQUENTLY DISAGREED ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THESE AGREEMENTS. SAUDI AMB SAUDI AMB SAID HE HAD HELD MEETING AT HIS HOME ON FEB 1 AT WHICH LEBANESE ARMY COLONEL MUSA KAHAN (WHO IS ACTING AS MILITARY ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT SARKIS) PRESENTED A DETAILED LIST OF GOL UNDERSTANDINGS OF THESE AGREEMENTS TO GROUP OF PALESTINIAN LEADERS, INCLUDING ARAFAT, ZUHAYR MUHSIN, GEORGE HABASH, NAYIF HAWATMAH AND OTHERS. IN MANY CASES, AL SHAER SAID, THE PALESTINIANS HAD AGREED WITHOUT ARGUMENT TO THE LEBANESE INTERPRETATION AND HAD PROMISED TO BEGIN IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION. IN OTHER CASES, PALESTINIANS HAD INSISTED THEIR UNDERSTANDING WAS DIFFERENT AND SAID THEY NEEDED TIME TO CONSULT THEIR "LAWYERS."

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY COMMENT THAT IN SOME CASES PALESTINIANS WERE LIKELY TO DISAGREE AMONG THEMSELVES, SAUDI AMB ADMITTED THIS WAS A PROBLEM. HE SAID HE TOLD ARAFAT VERY FRANKLY THAT IF HE COULD NOT MAKE A BINDING COMMITMENT ON BEHALF OF ALL  
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PALESTINIAN GROUPS, THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE WOULD HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE ELSE WHO COULD. ARAFAT HAD RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT WAS WHY HE HAD BROUGHT SO MANY PEOPLE TO THE MEETING--SO THAT THEY COULD NOT ACCUSE HIM OF SELLING THEM OUT BEHIND THEIR BACKS.

5. SOUTHERN LEBANON. DURING DISCUSSION OF SOUTHERN LEBANON, SAUDI AMB SAID HE DID NOT THINK PROBLEMS THERE COULD BE SETTLED "BEFORE GENEVA." IT WAS NOT ADVISABLE TO LEAVE PALESTINIANS UNPOLICED IN THE THE SOUTH, BUT IT WAS EQUALLY DANGEROUS TO USE SYRIAN ASF FORCES SINCE THIS MIGHT LEAD TO DIRECT SYRIAN CONFRONTATION WITH THE ISRAELIS, ON THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IN NABATIYA, HE HAD THEREFORE SUGGESTED TO SARKIS THAT A HAND-PICKED 100-MAN LEBANESE ISF UNIT BE SENT THERE TO ESTABLISH SECURITY. AT SAME TIME, HE HAD OBTAINED ARAFAT'S AGREEMENT TO DESIGNATE A SPECIFIC FATAH UNIT, UNDER ONE OF THE BEST PALESTINIAN COMMANDERS, TO COOPERATE WITH THE LEBANESE UNIT AND MAINTAIN ORDER AMONG THE PALESTINIANS. IN THIS WAY, HE THOUGHT, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE ASF UNIT TO

BE WITHDRAWN WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO THE SECURITY SITUATION IN  
THE AREA.

6. COMMENT: THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR'S PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT  
LEBANESE-PALESTINIAN FORCE IN NABAYIYA IS IMAGINATIVE, BUT  
WE HAVE NO REPORTS THAT AN ISF UNIT IS BEING FORMED THAT  
COULD FULFILL THIS ROLE.

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## Message Attributes

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